

REMARKS

Applicant concurrently files herewith a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) and corresponding RCE fee.

Claims 8 and 34-52 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claim 8 has been amended into independent form in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. Claims 34-52 have been added to claim additional features of the invention and to provide more varied protection for the claimed invention. Claims 1-7 and 9-33 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant has rewritten allowable claim 8 in independent form and has canceled claims 1-7 and 9-33.

Applicant submits that the cancellation of claims 1-7 and 9-33 renders the Examiner's prior art-based rejections moot.

New claims 34-52 have been added to claim additional features of the invention and to provide more varied protection of the claimed invention. These claims are independently patentable because of the novel features recited therein.

Moreover, Applicant submits that claims 34-52 are directed to a shop terminal base unit.

According to an aspect of the claimed invention (e.g., as claimed in claims 34-52), a seller can easily participate in the virtual shopping mall even if he does not have an excellent command of computers, since the seller has only to input the necessary data in accordance with the guidance displayed on the screen. In addition, the shop terminal

base unit is provided in one of real stores, which are chained to one another and form a physical distribution system.

These features of the claimed invention are not taught or suggested by any combination of the cited references.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 8 and 34-52, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

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Respectfully Submitted,



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